

*Landmark Legislation Gives Nonprofit Sector Official Voice in Government*

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**Washington, DC** - At a press conference on Capitol Hill today, Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-04) announced the introduction of her groundbreaking legislation, the Nonprofit Sector and Community Solutions Act (H.R. 5533). This bill is one of the first federal initiatives to address the nonprofit sector as a whole. It will take the first steps toward integrating the nonprofit sector into the federal policymaking process by establishing formal structures in Congress and federal administrative agencies focused on the success of nonprofits.

"As powerful and productive as nonprofit organizations are, their needs are not being addressed by Congress or the Administration. That must change," said Congresswoman McCollum. "This legislation is the beginning of a new, positive conversation about the nonprofit sector in Washington and across the country. If Congress can work with leaders in the nonprofit and foundation communities we can build a stronger nonprofit sector, craft smarter federal policy, and create more vibrant communities in every state."

H.R. 5533 will create a bipartisan "United States Council on Nonprofit Organizations and Community Solutions," comprised of leaders from nonprofits, foundations, businesses, and all levels of government to identify high-priority issues and make formal recommendations to Congress and the Administration. The legislation will also establish the "Interagency Working Group on Nonprofit Organizations and the Federal Government" to improve policy coordination among agencies in their dealings with nonprofit organizations to enhance outcomes and accountability. Finally, the Nonprofit Sector and Community Solutions Act would assign the Department of Commerce the task of compiling data on nonprofits and develop metrics for performance, establish reporting requirements, and expand information so Congress can make well-informed policy decisions on nonprofit legislation.

The U.S. nonprofit sector is critical to our nation's economy and well-being. In 2008, as much as 5 percent of the U.S. GDP was produced by the nonprofit sector, according to the Government Accountability Office. The Congressional Research Service estimates that nearly 10 percent of the domestic workforce is employed by the nonprofit sector. That's roughly the

same number of Americans who work in manufacturing. Furthermore, a significant portion of federal, state, and local government programs require a nonprofit role in their implementation.

*Congresswoman Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations and Budget Committees.*

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